

RECORD OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BROOKLINE SCHOOL COMMITTEE HELD ON **WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1, 2016** AT 6:00 PM IN THE JAMES F. WALSH SCHOOL COMMITTEE ROOM, 5TH FLOOR, TOWN HALL. STATUTORY NOTICE OF THIS MEETING WAS FILED WITH THE TOWN CLERK.

School Committee Members Present: Ms. Ditkoff (Chairman), Mr. Pollak (Vice Chairman), Mr. Chang, Mr. Glover, Dr. Jackson, Ms. Scotto, and Ms. Stone. School Committee Members Absent: Ms. Charlupski and Ms. Stram. Also present: Dr. Connelly, Dr. Fischer-Mueller, Dr. Shmukler, Ms. Dunn, Mr. Lummis, and Ms. Coyne.

Others Present: Steve Lantos.

1. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

a. Calendar

Ms. Ditkoff called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. She noted upcoming events on the calendar.

b. Consent Agenda

ACTION 16-39

On a motion of Ms. Stone and seconded by Ms. Scotto, the School Committee VOTED (Mr. Pollak abstained because he was not at the May 19, 2016 meeting) to approve the items included in the Consent Agenda.

- i. Past Record: May 19, 2016 School Committee Meeting
- ii. Signature Authority for Summer Months (Attachment A)
- iii. Out-of-State Student Trip: Brookline High School Boys Crew to Mercer, New Jersey (National High School Rowing Championships); June 9, 2016 to June 13, 2016 (Attachment B)
- iv. Out-of-Country Student Trip: Brookline High School Music Department to Spain (Concert Tour); February 17, 2017 to February 24, 2017 (Attachment C)
- v. Out-of-Country Student Trip: Brookline High School Latin Trip to Italy; April 13, 2017 to April 21, 2017 (Attachment D)
- vi. Establishment of the Karen Kuskin-Smith Scholarship (Attachment E)

2. WELCOME BACK TO BROOKLINE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS RETURNING FROM CHINA

Ms. Ditkoff introduced Brookline China Exchange Coordinator Steve Lantos. Mr. Lantos introduced Teacher-Chaperone Elsbeth Leslie and the students who participated in this year's Exchange: Sean Higgins, Gabrielle Jablon, Rachel Percy, Watson Njoko, Jack Reed, Sam Russo, Taijai Slaughter, and Katherine Welch. Ms. Leslie and the students expressed their appreciation to the School Committee, school administration, Mr. Lantos, and the Brookline China Exchange Program Steering Committee for providing this opportunity. They talked about their experiences and the long-term impact of participation in this program. The School Committee members

thanked the students for sharing their insights and congratulated them for taking advantage of this opportunity to challenge themselves through immersion in another culture.

3. SUBCOMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

a. Finance

Ms. Ditkoff reported that Town Meeting approved the FY 2017 School Budget. The administration will be implementing measures to ensure that Town Meeting members are informed of the budget process and have access to all budget documents.

b. Capital Improvements

Mr. Pollak provided an update on upcoming meetings related to school capital projects: June 7, 2016 Joint Meeting of the School Committee and Board of Selectmen (update on Site Selection Study and review of the current timeline for selecting a site in October 2016 for a 9th K-8 elementary school); June 8, 2016 Devotion School Project Community Meeting (update and public input); June 13, 2016 Brookline High School Expansion and Renovation Community Meeting (update and public input), and June 14, 2016 Community Meeting on the 9th School Site Selection Study (update and public input). Mr. Pollak provided an update on various projects. There will be an open house at 30 Webster Street for students and parents/guardians before school starts. Each floor will be a grade level. It will be an effective instructional facility and its use will enable us to reduce construction time from 45 to 25 months.

c. Curriculum

Dr. Connelly provided a report on testing (see Interim Superintendent's Report).

d. Government Relations

Ms. Stone reported that the Earned Sick Time Warrant Article was defeated by Town Meeting by a close vote.

e. Policy Review

Dr. Jackson reported that the Policy Review Subcommittee will be meeting on June 2, 2016. The agenda will include review and possible votes on proposed financial policies and continuation of review of Public Schools of Brookline Anti-Bullying, Anti-Discrimination and Anti-harassment Policies.

f. Additional Liaisons and Updates

Ms. Ditkoff reported that she attended last night's Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) Forum with Mr. Bott. The forum was productive, informative, and well attended. Dr. Connelly reported on school water testing. (*Note: the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) subsequently issued a statement saying that they mistakenly reported that water tests done at Baker School and the Brookline High School had elevated lead levels.*) Ms. Ditkoff reported that she and other current and former School Committee members attended an event earlier today honoring Dr. Fischer-Mueller and Dr. Shmukler. Dr. Fischer-Mueller and Dr. Shmukler provided

extraordinary service to the Public Schools of Brookline and always put the students' needs first. They are extraordinarily talented and we will miss them dearly. We congratulate them on their new positions and wish them all the best.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Dan Debowy asked the following questions: *For those measures/tests that are not required by the state, is the data sent or released to any entities (e.g., foundations, associations, corporations) other than the School District itself? Can the databases we are compiling be searched by any entities or individuals other than those within the School District? Can these datasets be purchased by others? Can the makers of any software we are using (or their corporate affiliates) claim some right to the data, and thus search/send/release/sell the datasets we're generating using their software? If the answers to any of the above are yes, then who are the outside entities involved?*

Furthermore, has there been opportunity for informed consent on the part of parents, and where/when does this take place? Is the School District compensated for the use of data?

Kate Bowditch stated that our teachers and administrators have made progress in addressing equity issues. Our programs and initiatives to address the achievement gap have measures in place to collect data and assess progress. We already disaggregate many types of data to assess student achievement, e.g., SAT, ACT, MCAS, AP scores; attendance; National Honors Society inductions; course enrollment; and matriculation.

Dr. Wender-Shubow presented a statement signed by many Town Meeting members that states *"We support our Brookline educators in their goal of achieving a contract that upholds Brookline's longstanding dedication to meeting the unique needs of every child. We endorse placing reasonable limits on workload, including paperwork, and guaranteeing educators time for creative lesson planning and to provide individualized support to student and colleagues. Respecting the importance of fairness and a real voice for our teachers on the job, we understand that their working conditions are also our students' learning conditions."* Dr. Wender-Shubow stated that charter schools take away control and are a top down management model. She requested that the School Committee sign on in opposition to lifting the charter school cap. Dr. Wender-Shubow stated that the Massachusetts Association of School Committees has taken a position on the use of assessments and tests in districts for evaluation. We need time to talk about which assessments are working.

Bob Miller stated that he is hoping for more of a partnership; money is not the issue; the issue is the educators' inability to do the best job they can do.

Toby Raybould spoke regarding the time needed to complete district assessments and the need to look at teachers' workload and the amount of paperwork and time spent in meetings. Teachers are qualified to make their own choices and the paraprofessionals and teachers deserve a living wage.

Lisa Guisbond expressed her gratitude and respect for the schools, School Committee, and teachers. She asked why there is not more effort to think creatively and engage with critical issues.

Carol Schraft spoke in support of the request to name the Driscoll Library after retiring Librarian Amy Neale and presented a petition in support of the request. Ms. Neale made the original vision for the library space come true. She has been the consistent curriculum leader of the school.

Nancy Frane asked that the School Committee work with the Brookline Educators Union to settle the contract. She noted the non-teaching duties required of teachers that are displacing the important work with students and consulting with parents about students. Katherine Stewart had several questions/comments related to the Office of Strategy and Performance (cost, function, data requests of teachers, teacher input into design of the department, data privacy concerns, department funding source, use of override funds, and the process for recruiting and hiring the Special Assistant to the Superintendent).

Rich Day spoke in support of the request to name the Driscoll Library after retiring Librarian Amy Neale. He read letters written by students and spoke about what Ms. Neale means to the Driscoll community.

Ivan Mercado stated that this acrimonious labor dispute is disheartening and impacts the students. He emailed all of the School Committee members and only heard back from the Chairman of the School Negotiations Subcommittee. Elected officials should be responsive. He asked for a matrix to measure additional time spent collecting data. Teachers should be compensated for additional work. The paraprofessionals should be paid a fair wage.

Marianne Taylor spoke in support of the request to name the Driscoll Library after retiring Librarian Amy Neale. This request is of great importance to the Driscoll community. The School Committee made an exception to the policy for an administrator. There shouldn't be separate rules for administrators and teachers.

Lauren Kelly Talanian spoke about the amount of time teachers spend doing assessments. In addition, new literacy and curriculum initiatives have been rolled out with very little training. We are moving away from being a system that is child driven. Not all of what we want students to learn is quantifiable. Teachers have only so much time in a day. What are we losing and where is the opportunity for teachers and parents to be part of the conversation?

Janice McKeowan stated that paraprofessionals are part of the team and deserve fair pay.

Ludovica Mottura spoke to the need to grant employees autonomy to fulfill their work on a daily basis to maintain energy and avoid demoralizing employees.

5. INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Connelly provided the following report:

1. *Today's Students, Tomorrow's Teachers (TSTT)*

In recent years, the staff assigned to the Brookline High School (BHS) TSTT program have brought their students to a Brookline School Committee meeting to discuss and highlight their year's activities. This year the program is no longer affiliated with the regional TSTT program, which disbanded last fall. Our two TSTT teachers, Malcolm Cawthorne and Jeanette Sergeant Lindor are committed to offering our BHS students the beneficial experience of the TSTT program until they graduate in June 2017. Due to conflicts, the students and staff were unable to attend our School Committee May 19th and June 1st meetings. It is hoped they will be available to share some highlights of this year at our June 16th School Committee meeting. The following is a mid-year TSTT update submitted by Malcolm Cawthorne and a year-end update submitted by Jeanette Sergeant Lindor.

Malcolm Cawthorne – TSTT Mid-Year Update:

TSTT is in its fifth year at Brookline High School. TSTT's first cohort graduated last June. Only one is at a TSTT college, on scholarship, but three of the six intend to become school faculty and staff. There are six juniors in the remaining cohort who have been working toward understanding teaching and the powerful influence of a teacher of color. This cohort has visited numerous colleges in Massachusetts and attended workshops to increase general knowledge and skills while understanding how these skills will be beneficial in the world of education. Our plan is to continue this general model but to tailor it more to the needs of our cohort. The kids have a wide array of interests in education and the mentors want to address and cultivate these intellectual curiosities. We have already examined different types of jobs in education (Counselors, Administrators, Higher Ed., Union leaders and advocates, etc.), brought in speakers to help understand these varied careers and explored these roles in different school systems. The students are eager to look at current issues in education that might affect their futures as educators; students have expressed a want to learn about Special Education, English Language Learners (ELL), Clustering, tracking, Cultural Competency and Curriculum development. We intend to keep the path we have followed through TSTT and meet the real needs of our students so that they want to return and teach in Brookline. As mentors, we have committed to working with these young people until they graduate in June 2017.

Jeanette Sergeant Lindor – Year-End Update – May 11, 2016

The program has six 11th grade students. Below is what we have done with the students this year:

- *Monthly Meetings since October. Topics covered have included:*
 - *Reviewing Brookline Public School structure and compare it to Boston,*
 - *Watching “ChicagoLand” Netflix Doc Series on how public education intertwines with the government, police department, private businesses, etc.*
 - *Review individual student transcripts*
 - *Discuss test schedule for 11th grade*
 - *Discuss summer plans and teaching related opportunities. One student will be work for Writer’s Inc. at Simmons College this summer.*
 - *Discuss different education positions and qualifications*
- *Other Activities:*
 - *Field trip to Boston University, February 25, 2016. Took official BU tour, met with students from the School of Education, met with former Headmaster, Bob Weintraub in his current role as Educational Leadership Director, met with Royal Sanyika-Hall, current BU freshman and TSTSS/BHS graduate, Class of 2015, met with two education professors;*
 - *Students were invited to the Diversity Matters Open House on April 5th. One of the TSTT students who gave a tour to attendees said the following, “Running a tour was a lot of fun and it made me think a lot about what our school is like and I was able to see what adult teachers who are trying to find a job look for in a classroom.”*
 - *Students are now in the process of planning to shadow a BHS teacher.*

2. BHS Senior Class Graduation Schedule

Graduation Day is Sunday, June 5th. Graduation ceremonies will begin at 1:00 p.m. on Cypress Field, or in case of rain will be held in the Schluntz Gymnasium. The day begins with a Scholarship Breakfast at 9:00 a.m. in the Quadrangle. In case of poor weather, the breakfast will take place in the cafeteria. This is an annual event where scholarship donors sit with Senior class recipients. The Scholarship Breakfast runs from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. There will be a 50th year Reunion class reception in the MLK Room from 12:00 Noon to 12:45 p.m. The 50th reunion class members process into the graduation ceremony with the Class of 2016. At 12:45 p.m., we meet in the MLK Room to line-up for the graduation procession. The Superintendent, Headmaster, School Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman, and our graduation speakers are at the front of the procession, followed by faculty and then our 2016 graduates. The School Committee Chairman presents diplomas on stage to each graduate who then shakes hands with the Headmaster, Superintendent, and other BHS administrators.

3. 9th School and High School Expansion – Upcoming Public Meetings June 1 – June 14th

See enclosed schedule of Public Meetings over the next two weeks.

4. Public Schools of Brookline (PSB) Required Testing K-8

Due to many recent questions concerning required testing in the Public Schools of Brookline, Dr. Jennifer Fischer-Mueller provided the following list of required K-8 assessments currently required by PSB:

PSB required assessments for K-8 classroom teachers

1. Local Assessments

Student results from the following local assessments are gathered by the district in order to gain a system-wide understanding of student progress towards our grade level learning expectations.

A. Literacy: Benchmark Assessment System (BAS)

- ❖ The BAS is an individually administered literacy assessment that is given to K-8 students in the fall of each year. Each K-5 student and a number of 6-8 students are also given the BAS in the late winter / early spring.*
- ❖ The assessment takes an average of 30 minutes per student. It is used to determine a student's current level of reading achievement and provide information about the specific reading strategies over which the students has control or does not yet have control.*
- ❖ Results are used by the teacher to plan for and provide appropriate literacy instruction for all students.*

B. Mathematics: Beginning-of-Year Assessment (BOYA) and End-of-Year Assessment (EOYA)

- ❖ BOYAs and EOYAs based on grade level learning expectations in Mathematics. There is a BOYA and EOYA for each grade level, K-8.*
- ❖ The BOYA and EOYA assessments are both administered to the whole class, and take from 45 minutes to an hour.*

- ❖ *The BOYA is a pre-assessment, administered at the beginning of the year. It is used to determine the areas of strength and learning for individual students relative to the grade level content. Results are used by teachers to plan instruction, including intervention and extension.*
- ❖ *The EOYA is administered at the end of the year, to determine the areas of strength and learning for individual students in mathematics at the conclusion of instruction at the grade level. Results are used by teachers to determine progress made by individual students on meeting the grade level expectations, and to plan/recommend intervention and extension.*

2. *State Assessments*

Brookline students participate in state-mandated MCAS exams; ELL students also participate in ACCESS exams. Both exams are administered annually.

A. *Current*

- ❖ *MCAS Math and ELA – grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8*
- ❖ *MCAS Science – grades 5, 8*
- ❖ *ACCESS – all ELL students*

B. *Future – DESE is still planning to introduce an MCAS exam for Social Studies*

5. *Administrative Searches - Update*

Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning

I am pleased to inform the School Committee that the Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning search was successfully completed last week when Nicole Gittens accepted my offer of appointment and signed her three-year contract. As you know, this search produced 47 applications, of which 8 were selected for interviews with 2 candidates being selected for second round interviews as finalists. Nicole Gittens, as our preferred finalist, also had an opportunity to meet and interact with most curriculum coordinators and support staff associated with the Office of Teaching and Learning. The 12 member search committee, 8 member finalist interview committee and the Teaching and Learning staff all expressed strong support for Nicole Gittens. Reference checks to the Boston Public Schools also proved to be extremely positive. Nicole Gittens comes to Brookline after serving as a highly successful Headmaster at the John D. O'Bryant School of Mathematics and Science and Assistant Headmaster of the Urban Science Academy. Prior to her 11 years in administration for the Boston Public Schools, Nicole was a mathematics teacher at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School from 1997 through June 2005.

Deputy Superintendent for Student Services

Our Search Committee is in the process of interviewing the candidates selected from the pool of 30 applications. Initial interviews are scheduled to be completed by Friday, June 3rd. Second round interviews with selected finalists are scheduled to be held during the week of June 6th. We are still on schedule to complete this search process by the School Committee's June 16th meeting.

We are currently planning to invite all our newly hired administrators to the Schools Committee's June 16th meeting to meet the School Committee and to acknowledge the fine work of our several inclusive administrative search committees.

Related Transition Efforts

We have currently made plans for Lesley Ryan Miller, Senior Director for Elementary Teaching and Learning to be in Brookline on June 15th and June 16th to begin meeting with Math, ELA, Science, Social Studies and World Language Coordinators. It is further planned for Jennifer Fischer-Mueller and Nicole Gittens to spend time transitioning in late June and throughout the months of July and August 2016.

6. Staff and Parent / Guardian Surveys

We have gotten the final results back from the surveys taken by staff and parents / guardians earlier this year. As you know we administered the surveys much later this year than a year ago due to working with a survey provider for the first time, and our Director for Research and Accountability being on maternity leave for most of the fall. The survey data was recently shared with Principals and discussed at our Leadership Team meeting. Principals will share their school-level results and district-wide results with their staff and faculty on June 14th. I will share district results with the School Committee at the June 16th School Committee meeting. Because of the late reporting of the data, school faculty and staff will undertake a closer review of the data at the beginning of the new school year and address any identified needs during the 2016-2017 school year.

7. Update on Kindergarten Enrollment Registrations

The attached page labeled Class of 2029 enrollment data is a status report on next year's Kindergarten registration numbers as of May 31, 2016. The Kindergarten enrollments numbers, which now include approved METCO and Materials Fee enrollments, stands at 521 students as of May 31, 2016. At this time last year, we had 564 students enrolled, which means we are slightly below last year's enrollment. As of May 31st the Kindergarten assignments are as follows:

<i>School</i>	<i>Max numbers at 22 per class</i>	
<i>Baker</i>	<i>72</i>	<i>88</i>
<i>Devotion</i>	<i>76</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Driscoll</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>66</i>
<i>Heath</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>66</i>
<i>Lawrence</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>88</i>
<i>Lincoln</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>66</i>
<i>Pierce</i>	<i>84</i>	<i>110</i>
<i>Runkle</i>	<i>56</i>	<i>66</i>
<i>Pending</i>	<i>4</i>	

School Committee members expressed their appreciation to Dr. Connelly for his exceptional collaborative leadership of the schools.

6. SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACTIONS

**a. Appointment to EDCO Collaborative Board of Directors for 2016-2017
(Proposed Vote)**

ACTION 16-40

On a motion of Ms. Ditzkoff and seconded by Mr. Chang, the School Committee VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to appoint Ms. Charlupski to the EDCO Collaborative Board of Directors for 2016-2017.

7. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss.

8. PROPOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION

By unanimous roll call vote at 8:05 PM, the School Committee entered into Executive Session for Purpose 2, to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel (principals) and for Purpose 3, to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining (Brookline Educators Union-Units A, B, and Paras) because the Chairman has declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the School Committee's bargaining position. By unanimous roll call vote at 10:00 PM, the School Committee reconvened in public session.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Ditzkoff adjourned the meeting at 10:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robin E. Coyne, Executive Assistant
Brookline School Committee